# End Of The Night

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# End Of The Night

by WordsAblaze

Summary

"Will?"

He doesn't reply, but that's not entirely surprising, considering how he's barely conscious. He's rocking back and forth ever so slightly, but his movements aren't exactly controlled, and Hannibal feels the sharp tug of dread as Will leans further over the edge of the roof.

"Oh, Will…" Hannibal breathes, lost in his observations until a harsh breeze pushes against them, sending him forwards and Will backwards. Backwards, towards the lurking hands of gravity.

Notes

entering the final week, aka the help-these-all-feel-the-same-now week,,,,

day 23 prompts used: shadows / stalking

See the end of the work for more notes

Hannibal isn't stalking Will.

He really isn't. But ever since Will had been found wandering in the middle of the night by the police, Hannibal had taken it upon himself to regularly check in on him; if he didn't know himself better, he'd call it guilt.

As it is, it's *professional curiosity* and professional curiosity alone that has him driving to Wolf Trap every other night. And that same professional curiosity means he's there to see Will perched on the roof, seemingly staring at one of his dogs in the window with his back to the road.

Hannibal doesn't even pause to lock the car before he's on his feet, all but sprinting to the front door. It's ajar, which is quite frankly worse than him having to break it down, but it does mean he can make his way to the roof with ease.

He shrugs off his blazer and—regrettably—drapes it across a dust-covered armchair before shushing the dogs and carefully clambering out of the window, keeping his eyes trained on Will's glazed ones. He takes in the goosebumps along Will's arms as he inches across the tiles, wobbling a little as they shift underneath him.

"Will?"

The other man doesn't reply, but that's not entirely surprising, considering that he's barely conscious. He's rocking back and forth ever so slightly, but his movements aren't exactly controlled, and Hannibal feels the sharp tug of dread as Will leans further over the edge of the roof with every other sway.

"Oh, Will…" Hannibal breathes, lost in his observations until a harsh breeze pushes against them, sending him forwards and Will backwards. Backwards, towards the lurking hands of gravity.

With a not so dignified curse, Hannibal throws himself towards Will, grabbing his arms before gravity can stake its claim on him. Thankfully—but also worryingly—Will doesn't protest to being harshly tugged away from the edge of the roof, his eyes fluttering and staying closed as Hannibal guides him back towards the open window, out of harm's way.

"I am going to need you to open your eyes, Will," Hannibal murmurs once his traitorous heart has calmed itself down. "Come back to me."

It's only when Hannibal places a hand on his neck to check his pulse does Will flinch, blinking rapidly before meeting Hannibal's gaze with wide eyes. "Doctor Lecter…?"

Hannibal offers Will a smile, hoping he can make it out under the dim light of the nearby streetlamp. "Indeed. Do you know where you are, Will?"

Will's gaze shifts from Hannibal to the open window, and his eyes grow impossibly wider as he twists in Hannibal's hold, his breathing quickening as he realises where he is. "No, no, not again. I—was I—where—how—?"

“Breathe Will,” Hannibal interrupts, cupping Will’s face in both hands so he has no choice but to look at Hannibal, to follow his instructions. “One question at a time. You’re perfectly safe.”

“I’m—we’re on the *roof* ,” Will replies incredulously, but he mirrors the pattern of Hannibal’s exaggerated breathing nonetheless. He groans once the panic has fizzled, and wraps his arms around himself, rubbing his arms. “Why—how are you here?”

Knowing that Will would abhor the idea of being monitored in any way, Hannibal chooses not to answer the question. “The most important thing right now is to get you back inside. I will make you a warm drink while you find yourself some warm layers to wear.”

As if on cue, one of the dogs begins barking.

Will’s head snaps up, and his frown eases just a little. Hannibal is most definitely *not* envious of the dog’s ability to alleviate Will’s distress, and is most definitely just *appreciative* that the animals seem to provide enough incentive to spur Will into moving.

It’s surprisingly easy to climb back through the window, and Will’s careful steps indicate that this isn’t his first time doing so. Making a note of that to discuss when he’s more settled, Hannibal guides Will downstairs, leaving him to settle on the bed—accompanied by almost his entire collection of dogs, of course—before making his way to the poorly-stocked kitchen.

“I don’t know if I have any tea,” Will admits.

“I’ll be just a moment,” Hannibal replies when he finds that there is in fact no tea in any of the rather barren cupboards. He pretends not to notice Will’s confused expression as he retrieves the flask he’d pre-prepared from his car, this time locking the vehicle and pocketing its keys before returning inside.

“You… brought me tea?” Will asks slowly, but his focus is clearly elsewhere, and his gaze travels almost frantically from one corner of the room to another. He’s donned a jacket in Hannibal’s brief absence, and his hands are curled so tightly around its edges that his knuckles have begun to whiten.

Unsure what he seems to be fearing from the shadows, Hannibal takes a moment to steel himself for the inevitable onslaught of dog hair before placing the flask on the bedside table and settling directly in front of Will, once again cupping his face in both hands and forcing Will’s anxious gaze to meet his own. “I’m in the habit of being equipped for any eventuality.”

Will blinks, his eyes searching Hannibal’s for a long moment before he nods, leaning into his hands with a soft shiver. “I’m not… Um, I’m not really a tea person.”

Hannibal can’t stop the amused smile that emerges at the statement, and Will offers up a small, sheepish smile in return. “But I—thank you. For… being here.”

“Of course. However, it may be wise to lock your windows before going to bed for the time being,” Hannibal advises as he lifts one of Will’s hands and places the flask into it. He guides the tea to Will’s mouth before he can reply, and watches as Will swallows some of it down, shivering as he does.

“It’s not a regular occurrence,” Will mumbles, his nose wrinkling at the aftertaste of the tea but taking another sip of it anyway. “This is nice.”

“Will.”

“It’s very rich and it tastes strange,” he amends bluntly, “but I guess I shouldn’t have expected any different.”

Hannibal’s smile only widens, and he takes a moment to wonder why that seems to be occurring with increasing frequency before humming in acknowledgement. “You have never struck me as someone particularly concerned with what they should and shouldn’t do.”

After shivering through another sip of tea, Will chuckles. “I suppose not.”

He can tell Will’s attention is drifting to whatever had caused him to sleepwalk again so Hannibal clears his throat and places a hand upon his neck. “Would you allow me to take your pulse, Will?”

Taking his silence—and associated lack of violent protest—as permission, Hannibal presses down above his pulse point, watching the way his eyes flutter closed. It’s a shame he doesn’t seem able to meet Hannibal’s eyes, but it’s still preferable to him misidentifying monsters in the shadows, so he doesn’t comment on it.

Will’s skin is warm to the touch, but the natural kind of warmth to be associated with nightmares and embarrassment and rapid transitions between duvets and rooftops, so Hannibal really has no excuse to spend the night in Wolf Trap. But Will’s hand claps his wrist as he pulls away, his grip tightening just before the point of becoming painful, and Hannibal can’t—not that he’d particularly *wanted* to—bring himself to leave.

End Notes

Will most definitely doesn't find that dusty blazer and wear it as a source of comfort whenever he finds himself sleepwalking again...

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